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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/537,618	06/03/2005	Christopher Thorne	GB020248	5448
24737	7590	11/27/2006	EXAMINER	
PHILIPS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & STANDARDS				MILLIKIN, ANDREW R
P.O. BOX 3001				ART UNIT
BRIARCLIFF MANOR, NY 10510				PAPER NUMBER
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DATE MAILED: 11/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/537,618	THORNE ET AL.	
	Examiner Andrew Millikin	Art Unit 2892	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 June 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-29 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 03 June 2005 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>060305</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 28-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite in that it fails to point out what is included or excluded by the claim language.
This claim is an omnibus type claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claims are directed to a method and apparatus that fail to produce a tangible result. A musical key is determined, notes are identified, etc., but no tangible result is produced.

Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter, i.e., software per se.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-26, 28-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki (U.S. Patent No. 5,424,486, hereafter '486) in view of Fujishima (U.S. Patent No. 6,057,502, hereafter '502).

7. Claim 1: '486 teaches a method for determining the key of an audio signal on the basis of chord information (see: abstract), but does not explicitly teach that the method includes the steps of:

for each of a plurality of signal portions, analyzing the portion to identify a musical note, and where at least one musical note is identified: determining a strength associated with the or each musical note; and generating a data record containing the identity of the or each musical note, the strength associated with the or each musical note and the identity of the portion;

for each of the data records, ignoring the strength associated with an identified musical note where said strength is less than a predetermined fraction of the maximum strength associated with any identified musical note contained within the data records;

determining a first note from the identified musical notes as a function of their respective strengths;

selecting at least a second and a third note from the identified musical notes as a function of the first note; or

determining the key based on a comparison of the respective strengths of the at least second and third notes.

'502 teaches a method for recognizing chords, including the steps of:

for each of a plurality of signal portions (column 6, lines 60-67; column 7, lines 61-63), analyzing the portion to identify a musical note ("frequency components"), and where at least one musical note is identified: determining a strength associated with the or each musical note ("a frequency spectrum having a number of peak energy levels"); and generating a data record containing the identity of the or each musical note, the strength associated with the or each musical note and the identity of the portion (column 2, lines 42-56);

for each of the data records, ignoring the strength associated with an identified musical note where said strength is less than a predetermined fraction of the maximum strength associated with any identified musical note contained within the data records (column 10, lines 38-52; see Fig. 11);

determining a first note from the identified musical notes as a function of their respective strengths (column 10, lines 38-41);

selecting at least a second and a third note from the identified musical notes as a function of the first note (column 10, lines 62-66); and

determining the key based on a comparison of the respective strengths of the at least second and third notes ('502 determines the chord based on a comparison of the respective strengths of the notes (column 7, lines 27-53), and '486 determines the key on the basis of chord information (see: abstract)).

Using the chord-determining method of '502 in order to determine the chords '486 uses to determine the key in order to increase the accuracy of detecting chords, decrease the

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possibility of noise frequency components affecting the detection of the chords, and to account for the case where the pitches of all the tones in the musical tune to be analyzed are deviated as a whole (see background of '502). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have used the chord-determining method of '502 in order to determine the chords '486 uses to determine the key in order to have increased the accuracy of detecting chords, decreased the possibility of noise frequency components affecting the detection of the chords, and to have accounted for the case where the pitches of all the tones in the musical tune to be analyzed were deviated as a whole.

Claims 2, 3, 4, 5: '502 teaches the method as claimed in claim 1, wherein: each portion is the same size (column 8, lines 2-8); each portion encompasses the same length of time (ibid); the size of the portion is a function of the tempo of the audio signal (ibid); the portions are contiguous (column 6, lines 60-64; see also Fig. 2).

Claims 6-8: '502 teaches the method as claimed in claim 1, wherein: the predetermined fraction is determined in dependence on the content of the audio signal (column 10, lines 38-41; see Figs. 7, 11, 15a, 15c)). '502 also teaches the method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the predetermined fraction lies in the range of one tenth to one half and wherein the predetermined fraction is one seventh, because any note that doesn't have a high enough amplitude will get attenuated further by the peak enhancement and autocorrelation steps (columns 8-10) and then cut out completely in

order for the chord to be determined (columns 12-14; Figs. 15a, 15b, 15c). As a result, a quiet note (such as one of the smaller peaks in Fig 15a) will be ignored (see Fig 15c), especially if it has extremely low amplitude. Since a note of the smallest amplitude imaginable would be ignored in '502, musical notes which have a strength less than one seventh (or one tenth) of the maximum strength associated with any identified musical note contained within the data records would be ignored.

Claim 9: '502 teaches the method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of analyzing the portion to identify a musical note comprises the steps of:

converting the portion to a frequency domain representation
(column 7, lines 10-11);

subdividing the frequency domain representation into a plurality of octaves
(column 7, lines 19-20);

for each octave containing a maximum amplitude:

determining a frequency value at the maximum amplitude (this is
necessarily accomplished by performing the FFT); and

selecting a note name of a musical scale in dependence on the frequency
value (column 10, lines 62-67); and

identifying a musical note in dependence on the same note name being
selected in more than one octave (column 8, lines 20-61).

Claim 10: '502 teaches the method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the conversion of the portion to a frequency domain representation is performed by means of a Fourier Transform (column 7, lines 10-11).

Claim 11: '502 teaches the method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the musical scale is the Equal Tempered Scale (column 10, line 64).

Claims 12: '502 teaches the method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of determining a strength associated with the or each musical note comprises the steps of: determining the amplitude of each frequency component of the musical note; and summing the amplitudes (column 8, lines 51-54).

Claim 13: '502 teaches the method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of determining the first note comprises the steps of: for each identified musical note, summing the strengths associated with the musical note in the data records (see claim 12 above); and determining the first note to be the identified musical note with the maximum summed strength (all notes will be identified in the process of carrying out the FFT, including the note with the maximum summed strength; since all of the notes are compared to all of the other notes (see columns 12-14), any one note can be referred to as "a first note").

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Claim 14: '502 teaches the method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first note is the tonic of the key (see Fig. 15a, 15b (C Major); the first note (C; on the right side of Fig. 15a) is the tonic of the key (C Major)).

Claims 15-23 are rejected for substantially the same reasons as claims 1-14.

Claim 24: '486 teaches the apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising an output device operable to send data corresponding to the key of the audio signal (the bus, part 11).

Claims 25, 26: '502 teaches a record carrier comprising software operable to carry out the method of claim 1 and a software utility configured for carrying out the method steps as claimed in claim 1 (column 15, lines 10-15).

8. Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '502 in view of '486 and in further view of '000. '005 is cited as evidence. '502 teaches the software utility as claimed in claim 26 (column 15, lines 10-15) and '486 teaches using a CPU to determine musical key (10), but neither '502 nor '486 explicitly teaches that the processor or software utility can be used in a jukebox. '486 does teach, however, that the musical key determining device detailed therein can be used to control an automatic accompaniment device (column 2, lines 40-43). Karaoke machines can be referred to as jukeboxes (see U.S. Patent No. 5,953,005), and it would have been obvious to use a

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karaoke machines as the specific automatic accompaniment device because karaoke machines are well-known automatic accompaniment devices (see U.S. Patent No. 5,542,000). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have used the obvious combination of '502 and '486 outlined above in a jukebox, since '486 suggests it.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andrew Millikin whose telephone number is 571-270-1265. The examiner can normally be reached on M-R 6:30-4 and 6:30-3 Alternating Fridays (EST).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Cleveland can be reached on 571-272-1418. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



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